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RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE WAYAO.

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Introductory.—Various writers have attempted to give English equivalents to the Yao terms describing relationship, or have alluded to the outstanding features of the system, but I am not aware that anybody has hitherto worked out the whole system.

Although it is very similar to other classificatory systems, I feel that a description of it may not be quite valueless, more especially on account of the evolutionary changes that are taking place.

The WaYao are a Bantu tribe, exogamous but not totemic, which until the middle of the last century inhabited that part of Central Africa lying to the East of Lake Nyasa, particularly in the valleys of the Lujenda and Rovuma rivers. Up to that time the tribe had not extended far from the area indicated except perhaps in a northerly direction, but owing to constant internecine war in their own territory the Yaos then invaded and conquered a large part of the neighbouring territories, especially to the south, in what is now called Nyasaland.

I have said that the WaYao are not totemic, and that statement is correct at the present time. Opinions differ, however, as to how recent their loss of totemism is; though their initiation ceremonies are generally regarded as totemic, even there, in my opinion, the evidence is not conclusive, and there remains no suspicion of totemism outside these ceremonies.

It should be mentioned that Islam is much more prevalent among the Yaos than among their neighbours, but its influence is not yet so deep-rooted as greatly to obscure the pure tribal customs, except to a certain extent among the rising generation.

To facilitate description the relationships are given in tabular form, the relationship being given with reference to one man or woman.

In Table I, Column 1 describes the relationship, Column 2 gives either the nearest equivalent of the Yao term, or, if none, the actual terms. Columns 3-9 give the various relations of the person named in Column 1, as they would be named by the man or woman under consideration.

For example, the brother of (*a*)'s father (Column 1) is regarded as (*a*)'s father (Column 2), the wife of (*a*)'s father's brother is (*a*)'s *alongo* (Column 3), their child a kin "brother" or "sister" (Column 4), and so on (see Table I).

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601 In Table II, the relationships mentioned in Column 1 are defined in Columns 2-9.

Thus a brother (*ol (o)*) is, *inter alia*, the son of (*o*)'s father's brother (Column 2), the husband of the daughter of (*o*)'s father's sister (Column 4), and so on (see Table II).

Before the tables can be fully intelligible, however, a brief explanation of terms having no English equivalent is necessary :—

(*o*) *Akwepo* and *Akwau* are terms exclusively given to relations by marriage.

Akwau is a brother or sister by marriage—it is not advisable to use the terms "brother-in-law" or "sister-in-law" as they are too circumscribed.

Akwepo has not even an approximate equivalent in English owing to the diversity of relationships included (*e.g.*, wife's mother and great-grand-daughter's husband).

MwiAuni is a special term given to the children of a paternal aunt or maternal uncle, to distinguish them from those of a paternal uncle or maternal aunt.

[582] *Awiduni* are not only allowed to marry but are encouraged to do so.

Akwilomo is used only for a maternal uncle, and *akipwe* is the reciprocative term for a sister's son.

The use of inverted commas with English terms (*e.g.*, "brother") indicates that the person is regarded by the Yao as being of the same relation to him as the term usually signifies in English. Thus a Yao regards the son of his maternal aunt, for instance, as being exactly the same relation as his own brother (by the same parents); this relationship is indicated as "brother."

601 428 *Succession.* The common rule of discriminating between the children of a brother and sister and those of two brothers or of two sisters is present here, and is combined with the equally common one of succession to the sister's son.

The rule of succession is, strictly speaking, to the eldest son of the eldest sister. If, however, a man and his advisers consider him to be unsuitable, or in event of his death, the succession passes to the following in order of precedence: younger son of the eldest sister, younger son of a younger sister, and son of own daughter.

Only by general consent can the succession pass elsewhere, but it not infrequently happens that intrigue prevents the death of all the legal heirs of a wealthy or powerful man. In such cases, but only by general consent, the succession may pass to a brother (by the same mother), any "son," or even to a powerful vassal; it is often felt that a wealthy or influential man is likely to contribute to the peace and welfare of the country rather as the chief, than as a probably turbulent vassal of a man whose succession is apt to be controversial. On the death of such a man, however, matters are often in a state of chaos owing to the multitude of claimants, the members of the two families; I have known two such cases. A man, also, who

[TEXT CONTINUES ON Page 394--Analyst]

TABLE I.—*Showing the Tee relationships of one person.*

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
English Relationship.	Tee Relationship.	Relationship of Wife or Husband.	Relationship of Child.	Relationship of Child's Wife or Husband.	Relationship of Grandchild.	Relationship of Grandchild's Wife or Husband.	Relationship of Great-Grandchild.	Relationship of Great-Grandchild's Wife or Husband.
One father	Father	Mother	Brother or sister	Above				
One father's brother	Father	Above	Brother or sister	Above				
One father's sister	Father	Father	Husband	Brother or sister				
One mother	Mother	Father	Brother or sister	Above				
One mother's brother	Above	Above	Husband	Brother or sister				
One mother's sister	Mother	Father	Brother or sister	Above				
Husband or wife's father	Above (father)	Above	Above	Brother or sister				
Husband or wife's father's brother	Above (father)	Above	Above	Brother or sister	Child	Above	Grandchild	Above
Husband or wife's father's sister	Above (father)	Above (father)	Brother or sister	Above				
Husband or wife's mother	Above	Above (father)	Above	Brother or sister				
Husband or wife's mother's brother	Above (father)	Above	Brother or sister	Above				
Husband or wife's mother's sister	Above	Above (father)	Above	Brother or sister				
Brother's wife's brother or sister	Above	Brother or sister	Child	Above				
Sister's husband's brother or sister	Above	Brother or sister	Child	Above				
Husband's or wife's brother's brother's wife's brother or sister	Brother or sister	Above	Child	Above	Grandchild	Above	—	—
Husband's or wife's sister's husband's brother or sister	Brother or sister	Above	Child	Above				
One child	Child	Above	Grandchild	Above	—	—	—	—

[1] Including a-a or daughter of married man or paternal uncle.

TABLE II.—*Defining Tao terms of relationship.*

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Tao Term.	Own Father's or Mother's	Father's Brother's	Father's Sister's	Mother's Brother's	Mother's Sister's	Wife's or Husband's	Son's or Daughter's	Grand-child's
Brother"	(a) Son (b) Husband of (a)'s wife's "sister"	(a) Son (b) Husband of (a)'s wife's "sister"	(a) Husband of daughter (b) Husband of (a)'s wife's "sister"	(a) Husband of daughter (b) Husband of (a)'s "sister"	(a) Son (b) Husband of (a)'s wife's "sister"	(a) Male Asiatic (b) Husband of "sister" (c) "Brother's" wife's "brother" (d) "Sister's" husband's "brother"	..	—
"Sister"	(a) Daughter (b) Wife of (a)'s husband's "brother"	(a) Daughter (b) Wife of (a)'s husband's "brother"	(a) Wife of son (b) Wife of (a)'s husband's "brother"	(a) Wife of son (b) Wife of (a)'s "brother"	(a) Daughter (b) Wife of (a)'s husband's "brother"	(a) Female Asiatic (b) Wife of "brother" (c) Brother's wife's "sister" (d) Sister's husband's "sister"	—	—
"Father"	"Sister" (of own father)	"Brother"	(a) "Brother" (b) Husband	—	Husband	(By courtesy) (a) Father (b) Father's brother (c) Father's sister (d) Husband of (a) (e) Husband of mother's sister (v. alsoqu)	—	—
"Mother"	"Sister" (of own mother)	—	—	"Sister"	"Sister"	—	—	—

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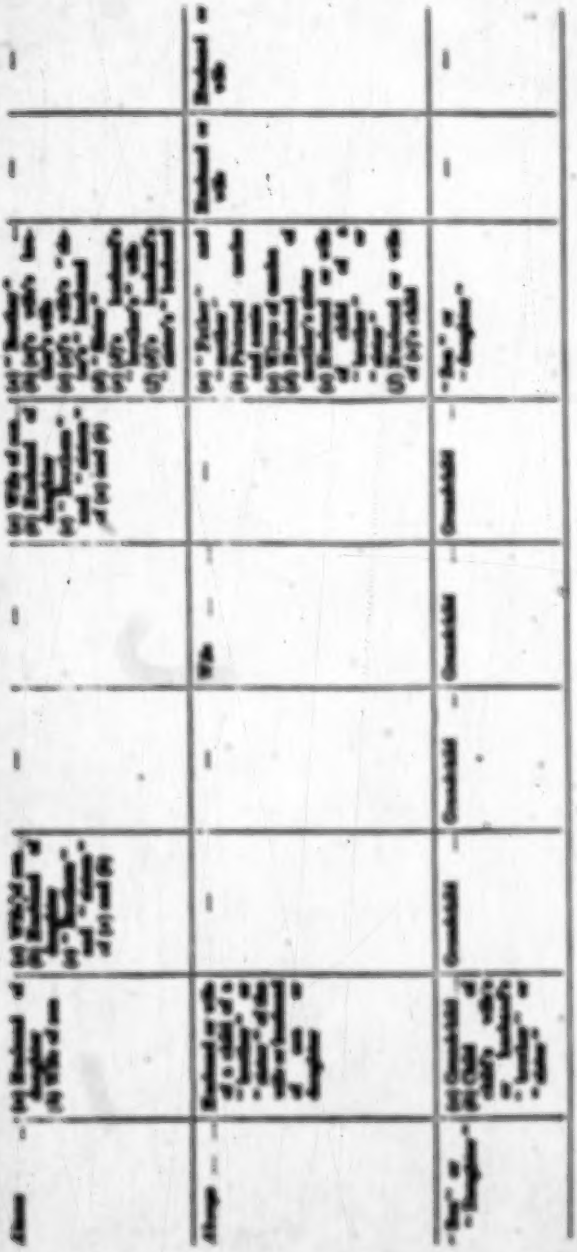

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knows that he is not legally justified in "entering into the name" is loath to do so, as he knows that he is not expected to make a successful chief. The defeat of Salimu, the fifth Makanjila, by the British in 1895 was, and still is, ascribed to the fact that he belonged to the male line.

The term *chipwe* (*mwipwepwe*, "his *chipwe*") may be used for any child of a sister. A female title (common amongst the Yao) descends to the eldest daughter of the eldest son of the bearer of the title.

Marriage.—Relatives who are forbidden to marry are called *mkidaumbo*; they include all those given in the table except *mdaosi*, *mkiawakulu* ("grandchildren"), and the wife of the maternal uncle. An heir, on succeeding, may marry the wife or wives of his maternal uncle, but not if he has previously married one of his daughters.

It is legal, though rare, for a man to marry the daughter of his own child (*chiwakulu*).

"*Brothers*" *and* "*Sisters*."—The term *akaga* is used to describe an exogamous clan, and the members are known as *mkaga* (*singular*)—*wakakaga* or *wa chikaga*, collectively. This word *mkaga* is probably a corruption of *mwa akaga* ("in the clan") as it requires the use of the term *mjakaw* (*ajaw*) "a companion," instead of the possessive pronoun. Thus *mkaga mjakaw* (*wakakaga ajaw*), "his (their) clan relation" (instead of *mkaga jwakaw*, *wakakaga wao*).

There is no general term corresponding to the English "brother." The nearest is *mkwabo*, which describes the relationship between a "brother" and a "sister," it is rarely used by women, however.

The elder "brother" of a man is called *akulu* or *mkiwemwe*. These terms are used for all sons of a father's elder "brother" or of a mother's elder "sister," and for the elder brother by the same parents. They are also used by a woman for any "brothers," elder or younger, senior or junior, in preference to the term *akwabo*.

Mjamaga is used for a son of a father's younger "brother" or of a mother's younger "sister," and for a younger brother by the same parents. It is used by a woman for her "sisters" in exactly the same way, but is never used by a woman of a man.

A man calls his "sister" *chawandi*, collectively, *wawajawa chawandi*; a girl refers to an elder, or senior "sister," by means of the same term; a man refers to a "sister" as *akwabowanga* or as *chawandi*.

The term *chiwakulu* is used for a "grandchild" (*mwiwakulumwanga*, "my 'grandchild'").

"*Father*" *and* "*Mother*."—A paternal aunt is distinguished as *atati wakanguwe* ("female father") if necessary, though she is, of course, not addressed as such. The elder brother of a father is referred to as *atati wakulumpwe* ("the great father"), his younger brother as *atati wamandi* ("the little father"). Other relatives are similarly distinguished.

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The alternative term, *wese*, common to nearly all Bantu languages, is usually reserved for "own father," but not always. 601

Latterly, though the relationship is really *akaye*, the husbands of a man's "daughters" or "grand-daughters" are called *atati*—in a complimentary sense, not of course in defining relationship.

The word *akaye* is rapidly falling into desuetude for men, and is, nowadays, never used in speaking to a man of that relationship, though used freely as a mode of address to women.

Amao (or *achikulu-wanyu*, *-wao*, etc., "my, his mother") may be further defined as "great" or "little" in the same manner as *atati*.

The parents of any *atati* or *amao*, and those of one's wife are called *ambuje* ("grandparent"). Great-grandparents are specified as "father" or "mother of my grandfather (or mother)."

The founder of a family is called *Likolo*, especially in prayer—except for the augmentative prefix obviously the same word as *Nanyolo*," a parent," which includes all "fathers" and "mothers." [182]

It is curious in this connection that a name for little girls in general, if one does not know their real name, is *chikolo*. All these words seem to be derived from *-kola* ("have," "possess"), and refer, probably, either to actual or potential possession of offspring.

Achinanyolo are distinguished as "male" or "female" according as they belong to the father's or mother's side—irrespective of their own sex.

Conclusions.—The Yao nomenclature of relationships, bearing as it does the evidence of former group marriages, is, like other classificatory systems, gradually changing in conformity with the development of the race, so that it can be used to express consanguinity; Rivers has, I believe, called attention to this process. 601 198 [121]

The Yao custom—now dying out—of lending one's wife to a visitor (usually a close friend) may be a remnant of ideas carried on from communal marriage, though such a privilege is never given to a relative. [839] [594]

In the same way a man who has had no children (a great stigma) may request his friend to help him—he will never ask a relative—and all of the three parties will keep the secret of the true paternity of any children resulting. [839] [840]

In many tribes the marriage of brother and sister, or a man with his sister's child, is permitted to compensate for the law by which a man's property goes to the son of a stranger, but nothing of the kind is allowed among the Yaos. Indeed, they view any incestuous union with particular horror, and such must be very rare. I have heard of a case of a man committing incest with the idea that he would thereby become endued with supernatural power, but all he gained was ostracism; in the old days he would have been burned. 588 835 [294]

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It is becoming increasingly evident, however, that the law of succession is being avoided, not by extension of the number of marriageable relatives, but by laxity in the observance of the law itself. Nowadays the legal heir is never quite sure of his position, though, as a matter of fact, there is not now much competition for a position which, under European rule, is often exacting and yet unprofitable.

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Moreover, owing to the abrogation of the drastic native laws regulating the sanctity of the marriage tie, marriages are becoming increasingly temporary in character. This is reflected in the system of relationship, as the relatives by marriage are becoming equally temporary.